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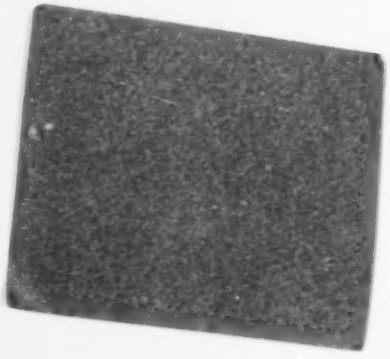
COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL
USES OF OUTER SPACE
Fortieth session
2-13 June 1997

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FORTIETH SESSION

**To be convened at the United Nations Office at Vienna,
on Monday, 2 June 1997, at 3 p.m.**



1. Opening of the session by the Chairman.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Election of officers.
4. Statement by the Chairman.
5. General exchange of views.
6. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.*
7. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-fourth session (A/AC.105/672).
8. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-sixth session (A/AC.105/674).

*Priority item in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/123, paragraph 35.

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9. (a) Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82);

   (b) Preparations by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Third UNISPACE Conference (UNISPACE III Conference), a special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space open to all Member States of the United Nations, based on the report of the Advisory Committee (A/AC.105/672, annex II, paras. 13-23).

10. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.

11. Other matters.

12. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

ANNOTATIONS*

Item 1: Opening of the session by the Chairman

1. The Chairman of the thirty-ninth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will make a statement summarizing the results of the inter-sessional informal consultations, held under his chairmanship, on the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, which led to the establishment of a new bureau of the Committee.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

Item 3: Election of officers

Item 4: Statement by the Chairman

2. Following the adoption of the agenda by the Committee and the organization of work, the Chairman of the fortieth session will make a statement reviewing developments of relevance to the work of the Committee that have taken place since its thirty-ninth session. The indicative schedule of work, which will be followed with flexibility, is contained in the annex to the present document.

Item 5: General exchange of views

3. The Committee will begin its substantive work with a general exchange of views.

Item 6: Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes

4. The General Assembly, in its resolution 51/123, paragraph 35, requested the Committee to continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes, taking into account the views expressed at its thirty-ninth session and at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-second session.

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*The annotations and the indicative schedule of work are not part of the agenda to be adopted by the Committee.

Item 7: Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-fourth session (A/AC.105/672)

5. At its thirty-fourth session, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/123, paragraph 18, considered the items below.

(a) United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the coordination of space activities within the United Nations system

(b) Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

6. The Subcommittee considered jointly, on a priority basis, the two above-mentioned items (A/AC.105/672, paras. 18-57). The report of the Subcommittee contains a review of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and its activities for 1996 and 1997 and a proposed programme of activities for 1998, which it recommended for approval (A/AC.105/672, paras. 23-34).

7. The Subcommittee continued to stress the necessity of ensuring the coordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system. It noted with satisfaction that the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities was scheduled to be held at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 28 to 30 May 1997 (A/AC.105/672, para. 39). The report of the Inter-Agency Meeting will be made available to the Committee at its fortieth session.

8. On the question of regional and interregional mechanisms of cooperation, the Subcommittee noted the efforts undertaken as part of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, in response to General Assembly resolutions 45/72 and 50/27, to establish, on the basis of affiliation to the United Nations, regional centres for space science and technology education in existing national or regional educational institutions in developing countries, as outlined in the report of the Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/660 and Add.1).

(c) Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, including, **inter alia,** *applications for developing countries*

9. The Subcommittee continued its consideration of this item on a priority basis. The views expressed on the item at its thirty-fourth session are reflected in its report (A/AC.105/672, paras. 59-68). The Subcommittee recommended that the item should be retained as a priority item on the agenda for its thirty-fifth session (A/AC.105/672, para. 68).

(d) Use of nuclear power sources in outer space

10. The Subcommittee continued its consideration, on a priority basis, of the item on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. The Subcommittee recalled that the General Assembly, by its resolution 47/68, had adopted the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, contained in that resolution. The Subcommittee also recalled the agreement of the Committee at its thirty-eighth session[1] that the Principles should remain in their current form until amended and that, before amendment, proper consideration should be given to the aims and objectives of any proposed revision. The Subcommittee agreed that, at the present time, revision of the Principle was not necessary (A/AC.105/672, para. 80). The Subcommittee also agreed that, until a firm scientific and technical consensus had been reached on the revision of the Principles, it would be inappropriate to pass on the topic to the Legal Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, para. 70).

11. The Subcommittee decided to reconvene its Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space. The report of the Working Group was adopted by the Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, paras. 74-75 and annex III). The Subcommittee took note of the statement by the International Atomic Energy Agency, which noted in particular that the principles relating to notification of re-entry of space objects with nuclear power sources on board, as well as those relating to subsequent assistance to States, should be revised in view of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (A/AC.105/672, para. 72). The Subcommittee also took note of the working papers submitted by the Russian Federation on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space (A/AC.105/C.1/L.208) and by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the progress with revision of the Principles (A/AC.105/C.1/L.210), as well as the information submitted by Governments in response to General Assembly resolution 51/123, paragraphs 22 and 32 (A/AC.105/659 and Add.1 and 2). The views expressed are reflected in the report of the Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, paras. 70-87). The Subcommittee recommended that the item be retained on its agenda for the thirty-fifth session (A/AC.105/672, para. 87).

(e) Space debris

12. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/123, the Subcommittee continued its consideration, on a priority basis, of the agenda item on space debris.

13. The Subcommittee noted with appreciation the report by the Secretariat prepared in response to its request to compile on an annual basis the information on various steps taken by space agencies for reducing the growth or damage potential of space debris (A/AC.105/663). The Subcommittee also took note of the information submitted by Governments in response to General Assembly resolution 51/123, referred to in paragraph 11 above. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction that, following its invitation, the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) had made a technical presentation on space debris modelling and risk assessment and agreed that IADC should be invited to make a presentation on space debris mitigation at the thirty-fifth session of the Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, para. 96). The views expressed are reflected in the report of the Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, paras. 89-104 and 107-113).

14. In accordance with the multi-year plan for the consideration of specific topics related to space debris, which it had adopted at its thirty-second session and had agreed to implement with flexibility, the Subcommittee at its thirty-fourth session focused its attention on modelling of the space debris environment and risk assessment. The technical report of the Subcommittee for 1997 is contained in the report of the Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, paras. 104-106). The report is to be carried forward and updated each year in order to establish a common understanding that could serve as the basis for further deliberations of the Committee on the matter. The Subcommittee took note of the technical changes and amendments to its technical report for 1996 (A/AC.105/C.1/L.214). Any changes or updates to each part of its technical report would be made at the following year's session, leading to the report on space debris being finalized by the Subcommittee in 1999 (A/AC.105/672, para. 99).

(f) Questions relating to space transportation systems and their implications for future activities in space

(g) Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit; examination of its utilization and applications, including,* inter alia, *in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to space communications developments, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries

(h) Progress in national and international space activities related to the Earth environment, in particular progress in the International Geosphere-Biosphere (Global Change) Programme

(i) Matters relating to life sciences, including space medicine

(j) Matters relating to planetary exploration and matters relating to astronomy

15. The Subcommittee continued its consideration of the above items; its views are reflected in its report (A/AC.105/672, paras. 115-119, 121-127, 129-135, 137-142 and 144-149). It recommended that consideration of the items be continued at its thirty-fifth session (A/AC.105/672, paras. 119, 127, 135, 142 and 149).

(k) The theme fixed for special attention at the 1997 session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee: space systems for direct broadcasting and global information systems for space research

16. The Subcommittee at its thirty-fourth session, in 1997, paid special attention to the theme "Space systems for direct broadcasting and global information systems for space research". It noted with satisfaction that, at its invitation, the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) had organized a symposium on the theme on 17 and 18 February 1997 (A/AC.105/672, para. 150).

17. The Subcommittee recommended that the theme to be the focus of special attention at its thirty-fifth session, within the context of the UNISPACE III Conference, should be "Scientific and technical aspects and applications of space-based meteorology" (A/AC.105/672, para. 170 (g)). The Subcommittee also recommended that COSPAR and IAF, in liaison with Member States, should be invited to arrange a symposium on that theme, with participation as wide as possible, during the first week of its thirty-fifth session (A/AC.105/672, para. 171).

Item 8: Report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-sixth session (A/AC.105/674)

18. At its thirty-sixth session, the Legal Subcommittee, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/123, paragraph 4, considered items 3 and 4 of its agenda, the deliberations of which are summarized in subsections (a) and (b) below.

(a) Question of review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space

19. Noting the results of the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the subject of nuclear power sources in outer space (see paragraphs 10 and 11 above), the Legal Subcommittee decided not to re-establish its Working Group on agenda item 3. The Legal Subcommittee agreed that, at the present time, revision of the Principles was not warranted. It also agreed that, at its thirty-seventh session, consideration by the Working Group of the item should again be suspended for one year, pending the results of the work in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and that the item should, however, be retained on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee (A/AC.105/674, paras. 23-27).

(b) Matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union

20. The Legal Subcommittee, through its Working Group on agenda item 4, continued its consideration of that item.

21. With regard to the definition and delimitation of outer space, the Subcommittee had before it the replies from Member States to the questionnaire on possible legal issues with regard to aerospace objects (A/AC.105/635 and Add.1-4) and a note by the Secretariat containing the results of the comprehensive analysis of those replies (A/AC.105/C.2/L.204), which had been prepared in response to a request by the Working Group at its 1996 session.

22. As for the discussion on the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, the Subcommittee had before it a working paper prepared by the Secretariat in cooperation with the secretariat of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (A/AC.105/C.2/L.205) in response to a request by the Working Group at its 1996 session. The working paper was an analysis of the compatibility of the approach contained in the working paper submitted by Colombia (A/AC.105/C.2/L.200 and Corr.1) to the Subcommittee at its thirty-third session, in 1996, with the existing rules and procedures of ITU relating to the use of the geostationary orbit. In response to the request by the Working Group at its 1996 session, a compendium of relevant sections and/or documents referred to in the working paper by Colombia was also circulated by the Secretariat (A/AC.105/C.2/1997/CRP.3/Rev.1). At the 1997 session, Germany submitted to the Subcommittee a working paper entitled, "Draft resolution - request to the International Telecommunication Union: ensuring equitable access to the geostationary satellite orbit" (A/AC.105/C.2/L.207/Rev.2).

23. The Subcommittee took note with appreciation of the report of the Working Group on agenda item 4 (A/AC.105/674, para. 36 and annex I).

(c) New items for the agenda of the Subcommittee

24. In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee at its thirty-ninth session,[2] the Subcommittee continued its informal consultations with a view to coming up with a list of annotated items agreed upon by consensus that could be considered by the Committee at its fortieth session for possible inclusion in the agenda of the Subcommittee. The discussions on the matter are reflected in the report of the Subcommittee on its thirty-sixth session (A/AC.105/674, paras. 38-44).

25. The Subcommittee recommended that a new agenda item entitled "Review of the status of the five international treaties governing outer space", as contained in a working paper submitted by Mexico (A/AC.105/C.2/L.206/Rev.1), should be included in its agenda starting with its thirty-seventh session, in 1998 (A/AC.105/674, para. 43). The Subcommittee also recommended that further informal consultations on specific proposals already made for possible new items of its agenda could continue at its thirty-seventh session, in 1998 (A/AC.105/674, para. 44).

Item 9 ***(a): Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82)***

26. As mentioned in paragraph 6 above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee considered jointly, on a priority basis, the item on implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82) and the item on the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. The Subcommittee, in its report, took note of the developments relating to the international space information service, technical studies, inter-agency coordination and cooperation and regional and interregional mechanisms of cooperation (A/AC.105/672, paras. 35-57).

27. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee reconvened at its thirty-fourth session, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/123, paragraph 21, the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Subcommittee adopted the report of the Working Group of the Whole, which contained conclusions and recommendations on the further implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 (A/AC.105/672, para. 159 and annex II).

Item 9 ***(b): Preparations by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Third UNISPACE Conference (UNISPACE III Conference), a special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, open to all Member States of the United Nations, based on the report of the Advisory Committee (A/AC.105/672, annex II, paras. 13-23)***

28. The General Assembly, in its resolution 51/123, paragraph 28, endorsed the recommendation of the Committee that a special session of the Committee (UNISPACE III), open to all States Members of the United Nations, should be convened at the United Nations Office at Vienna. In paragraph 29 of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Committee and the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to act as the Preparatory Committee and the Advisory Committee for UNISPACE III. The Assembly also requested the Preparatory Committee and the Advisory Committee to carry out the tasks entrusted to them in the report of the Committee on its thirty-ninth session[3] and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the progress made in the preparatory work for UNISPACE III.

29. The Advisory Committee, noting the above-mentioned requests by the General Assembly, decided that the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee could be called upon to carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the Assembly and requested the Working Group to give full consideration to those tasks and to report thereon to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (A/AC.105/672, paras. 156-158).

30. The Working Group of the Whole had before it a report by the Secretariat on matters relating to the planning of the special session of the Committee (UNISPACE III) (A/AC.105/662), prepared in response to the request by the Committee at its thirty-ninth session,[4] and working papers submitted by the United Kingdom, on behalf of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland (A/AC.105/C.1/L.209), by the United States of America (A/AC.105/C.1/L.211) and by the Group of 77 (A/AC.105/C.1/L.212).

31. On the basis of its deliberations, the Working Group of the Whole made recommendations concerning the objectives, form, venue, date, participants, provisional annotated agenda, financial aspects and additional components of the UNISPACE III Conference, which were reflected in its report (A/AC.105/672, annex II, paras. 17-23).

32. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee noted that the report of the Working Group of the Whole had provided the basis for the Committee, in its role as the Preparatory Committee for the UNISPACE III Conference, to carry out the task entrusted to it by the General Assembly (A/AC.105/672, para. 159). The Subcommittee, also in its role as the Advisory Committee, made further recommendations on matters relating to the UNISPACE III Conference. The views expressed by the Advisory Committee are reflected in the report of the Subcommittee on its thirty-fourth session (A/AC.105/672, paras. 156-165).

Item 10: Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status

33. The General Assembly, in resolution 51/123, paragraph 36, requested the Committee to continue to consider at its fortieth session its agenda item entitled "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status".

Item 11: Other matters

(a) Methods of work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies

34. The General Assembly, in its resolution 51/123, paragraph 13, noted that the Chairman of the Committee had undertaken and would continue to hold inter-sessional informal consultations among the members of the Committee with a view to reaching consensus decisions before the fortieth session of the Committee on the modalities of establishing a new composition of bureaux, and that all proposals made by delegations and groups of delegations, including the need for agenda restructuring and an examination of session duration, had been taken into account in the framework of those informal consultations. In paragraph 14 of the same resolution, the Assembly agreed that if consensus agreement was reached among the members of the Committee on measures relating to the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, those measures should be implemented during the 1997 sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies as the transitional arrangements for the year 1997.

35. During the fourth meeting of the inter-sessional informal consultations, held during the time allocated to the thirty-fourth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Chairman of the Committee introduced a package proposal that contained the elements for consensus agreement on the composition of the bureaux, agenda structures and the duration of sessions of the Committee and its two subcommittees. At the fifth meeting, held during the time allocated to the thirty-sixth session of the Legal Subcommittee, the package proposal, which will be formally submitted to the Committee at its fortieth session, was accepted by consensus by the members of the Committee, including a proposal for the composition of its new bureaux. The Chairman will report on the agreement and related issues at the beginning of the fortieth session of the Committee.

(b) Records of the Committee and its Legal Subcommittee

36. The General Assembly, in its resolution 51/123, paragraph 9, welcomed the fact that the Legal Subcommittee had reviewed its requirement for summary records and that, beginning with its thirty-sixth session, it would be provided with unedited verbatim transcripts in lieu of summary records. The Assembly, in paragraph 10 of the same resolution, noted with satisfaction that the Committee had been provided, at its thirty-ninth session, with unedited verbatim transcripts of that session in lieu of verbatim records and that the Committee would evaluate the use of unedited verbatim transcripts at its fortieth session to inform the General Assembly at its fifty-second session of the experiences of the Committee with the transcripts. In its resolution 51/211 B, the General Assembly requested the Committee to keep it informed, through the Committee on Conferences, of its experiences with the use of unedited transcripts.

37. The unedited verbatim transcripts of the thirty-ninth session of the Committee are contained in documents COPUOS/T.419-432. The Legal Subcommittee was also provided with unedited verbatim transcripts at its thirty-sixth session, and documents containing those transcripts (COPUOS/Legal/T.598-604) will be made available in due course.

(c) Observer status

38. The International Space University, a non-governmental organization, has applied for observer status with the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The related correspondence and the by-laws of that organization were circulated at the thirty-fourth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for the information of the members of the Committee. Consideration of its application for observer status should take place at the fortieth session of the Committee.

(d) Other reports

39. The Committee will have before it the report on the scientific and technical presentations to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-fourth session, including those presentations made as part of the symposium referred to in paragraph 16 above (A/AC.105/673). Additional reports may be submitted to the Committee as they become available.

40. The Committee may wish to discuss other matters as appropriate.

Notes

[1]*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/50/20), para. 62.

[2]Ibid., *Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/51/20), para. 211 (c).

[3]Ibid., paras. 178-185.

[4]Ibid., para. 182.

Annex

INDICATIVE SCHEDULE OF WORK

Date	*Morning*		*Afternoon*	
Monday, 2 June			Item 1	Opening of the session
			Item 2	Adoption of the agenda
			Item 3	Election of officers
			Item 4	Statement by the Chairman
			Item 5	General exchange of views
Tuesday, 3 June	Item 5	(continued)	Item 5	(continued)
Wednesday, 4 June	Item 6	Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes	Item 6	(continued)
			Item 7[a]	Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
			Item 9[a]	Implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82; and preparations by the Preparatory Committee for the UNISPACE III Conference
Thursday, 5 June	Item 7	(continued)	Item 7	(continued)
	Item 9	(continued)	Item 9	(continued)
Friday, 6 June	Item 7	(continued)	Item 11	Other matters[b]
	Item 9	(continued)		
Monday, 9 June	Item 8	Report of the Legal Subcommittee	Item 11	(continued)
Tuesday, 10 June	Item 8	(continued)	Item 8	(continued)
Wednesday, 11 June	Item 8	(continued)	Item 10	(continued)
	Item 10	Spin-off benefits of space technology		
Thursday, 12 June	Item 11	(continued)	Item 11	(continued)
			Item 12	Report of the Committee to the General Assembly
Friday, 13 June	Item 12	(continued)	Item 12	(continued)

[a]As in the past, items 7 and 9 will be considered jointly.

[b]During the time allocated for agenda item 11 at this meeting, the Committee may wish to hold informal consultations on additional agenda items for the Legal Subcommittee, as agreed during the open-ended informal consultations on the matter at the thirty-sixth session of the Legal Subcommittee.